

Building Community Resilience in Bywong and Wamboin

Report to the NSW Reconstruction Authority on a Grant provided by Resilience NSW to the Greenways Renewal Working Group auspiced by Bywong Community Inc



Prepared by the Steering Group, for the Building Community
Resilience in Bywong and Wamboin Project

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1. Australian Government and New South Wales Government - The BCR Project is a Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Fund project funded through joint Commonwealth/State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements put into place following the disastrous 2019/2020 bush fires.

Although funding for the BCR Project was provided by both the Australian and NSW Governments, the material contained herein does not necessarily represent the views of either government.
 2. Bywong Community Incorporated - The BCR Project was undertaken under the auspices of Bywong Community Incorporated (BCI). The help provided by BCI Officers, including the promotion of activities, is greatly appreciated.
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 11. The traditional owners of the land encompassing the Bywong and Wamboin Region and show our respect to the Elders, past, present and future.
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Acronyms

BCA	Bywong Community Association (BCA) is an incorporated Association registered with the Australian Securities and Investment Commission (ASIC) as Bywong Community Incorporated (BCI)
BBQ	Bar-be-que
BCI	Bywong Community Incorporated is a registered non-profit community organisation
BCR	Building Community Resilience
BCRBW	Building Community Resilience in Bywong and Wamboin
BCRRF	Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Fund
GRoW Group	Greenways Renewal Working Group
NBN	National Broadcasting Network
NSW	New South Wales
QPRC	Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council
RFS	Rural Fire Service
WRFB	Wamboin Rural Fire Brigade – the local volunteer fire brigade

Definitions and website

s.355 Greenways Management Committee	A QPRC section 355 Committee that Manages the Greenways on behalf of Council
BCRBW website	www.resilientbywongwamboin.net

1. Introduction

1.1 Document purpose

A requirement of the contractual arrangements for the Building Community Resilience in Bywong and Wamboin (BCRBW) Project is the preparation of a report detailing the Project outputs, outcomes, activities undertaken and acquittal of the funds expended. Each of these reporting aspects is detailed in this document.

1.2 The Project

The underlying concept behind the BCRBW Project was to improve resilience against future disaster, centred on extending the reach and effectiveness of two existing voluntary community initiatives: 1) the Bywong and Wamboin GRoW public walks program, that will liaise with and make referrals for 2) Community FireWise Groups.

These two voluntary initiatives were selected as they are in good standing and both operate across the whole community.

Specifically the Project's aim was to enhance resilience in the community through a program of "Walk, Talk and Connect with Neighbours".

The Project was funded under the Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Fund through joint Commonwealth/State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements put in place following the disastrous 2019/2020 bush fires.

The Project was undertaken under the auspices of Bywong Community Association (BCA). BCA is an Incorporated Association registered with the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) as Bywong Community Incorporated (BCI).

1.3 The need for this project

Bywong and Wamboin is a rural residential area in New South Wales, within 20 km of Canberra and 25 km of the nearest NSW town, Queanbeyan. Our community of 3,000-plus residents does not have a town centre nor any natural gathering place of significance. This is attractive for many people who do not want to live close to neighbours, have animals and want more space for their children, but also means serendipitous encounters with neighbours almost never happen.

We are a hybrid of an urban and a rural population with differing mindsets and expectations to match. This makes providing services and support to such a scattered population very difficult, and as a result, our community receives very little in the way of any government support - Local, State or Commonwealth. We have no local post boxes, no rubbish collection and until recent years, no signposts with our respective locality names. NBN services were but a dream, until the recent announcement of NSW Government funds to provide fibre optic cable connection, but not to all residents and in an unspecified timeframe.

The impact on our community of the devastating 2019/2020 fire season is difficult to estimate. The closest fire, the devastating North Black Range bushfire was only 25 km, but we were impacted

significantly by bushfire smoke from this fire and others south of Canberra for many weeks, plus ongoing drought and anxiety about the potential for fires locally. Many residents who daily commute from the region spent summer with their Bush Fire Survival items 'permanently' packed in their vehicle. On 2 separate occasions the Fire Danger Rating was 'Extreme' and community members were activating their Bushfire Survival Plans.

A review of social media group postings during that summer highlighted the lack of knowledge about how to respond to disasters and where to go for reliable information, leading to an unnecessary source of conflict in the community.

We have a wide range of ongoing and interacting threats, including bushfire and smoke, drought, heat, flooding and storm events, severely potholed local roads, plus wildlife encounters on the roads, power outages, telecommunication outages and other issues arising from living in a rural residential setting.

1.4 Relationship with Bywong Community Association (BCA)

The Greenways Renewal Working (GRoW) Group which applied for the Grant is a specialist group of the BCA.

In order for BCA to auspice the BCRBW Project the following was agreed:

1. BCA will:
 - a. Enter into a funding agreement with Resilience NSW;
 - b. Accept grant funds provided by Resilience NSW to the GRoW project into a dedicated BCA/GRoW bank account; and
 - c. Monitor and acquit the use of funds at the completion of the project.
 - d. Provide a GRoW Representative with online access to the BCA/GRoW bank account, to be able to co-authorise online transactions with a nominated BCA Committee officeholder.
2. GRoW will:
 - a. nominate a representative to provide an update on GRoW activities at each BCA Committee meeting;
 - b. provide a 'paper trail' for transactions of the BCA/GRoW bank account; and
 - c. provide all documentation for grant reporting and acquittal requirements with (then) Resilience NSW, regardless of whether it has to be submitted by GRoW or by BCA.

1.5 Governance arrangements

Appendix 1 details the roles and governance arrangements of parties associated with the BCRBW Project.

2. The Project in Detail

2.1 Time Frame

The BCRBW Project was funded with a start date of 1 July 2021. However, as a result of COVID restrictions and the inability to have public meetings, the Project did not get underway until the first half of 2022. Taking into account the suitability of seasons for encouraging residents to go walking, community activities were scheduled for Spring and Autumn of the 2022/2023 financial year.

2.2 The BCRBW Project

As identified in section 1.2, the BCRBW Project's aim was to enhance resilience in the community through a program of "Walk, Talk and Connect with Neighbours". Resilience related topics for discussion/talks were identified by our partners, participants and the Project Steering Group (section 2.3).

A sub aim of the project was to encourage people to not just 'step out' but to also 'step up' and participate in organising and/or running community activities. A leadership course was designed to target involvement when all involved are volunteers (section 2.4).

Although direct involvement with FireWise Group activity was precluded, related activities to promote FireWise interest continued (section 2.5).

To further the breadth of specialist guest speakers a podcast series was introduced (section 2.6).

Special events were also held relating to confidence building and looking after one's health.

2.3 The Walks Program

Three walks were scheduled for each of Spring 2022 and Autumn 2023. Each walk was to be undertaken in association with one or more guest speakers on a selected topic taken from a list of topics identified by community members. Walks also included morning tea or afternoon tea to encourage community members to get to know each other.

Walks	Topics covered by volunteer guest speakers
Spring 2022	
September	Identifying our wildlife and caring for them during a disaster
October*	Preventing the loss of valuables and personal items in a natural disaster, followed by Health and Family Fun Day supported by QPRC and including BBQ lunch, coffee van, magic show and health checks.
November	Managing dogs in a rural residential area, followed by issues that could arise from a substantial fire in the Bywong and Wamboin region, together with demonstrations of the progress of a fire that started near the Federal Highway using a fire simulation table.

Autumn 2023	
March	What weed is that and are you required to remove it from your property
April*	A personal experience of the 2019/2020 Bushfire
May	A guided retrospective - learnings from walk topics and podcasts including eliciting community members' suggestions for future resilience-enhancing activities for the community.

* For these walks, unfortunately the volunteer guest speakers were unable to attend on the day.

2.4 Leadership

The Step-up and Step Out leadership training was aimed at supporting potential walk leaders and FireWise Group convenors to improve their confidence and ability in leading and facilitating groups. A program of short sessions was planned and implemented.

2.5 FireWise

Community FireWise Groups are about fire safety and preparation measures, NOT active firefighting.

The Wamboin Rural Fire Brigade (WRFB) introduced Community FireWise Groups in December 2012, and a Group is made up of residents or community members with common bonds such as:

- commonality of location e.g. residents all live on a ridge, or on one or two roads;
- similarity of terrain and/or vegetation on individual blocks;
- proximity to timber stands; or
- proximity to other potential threats e.g. Goorooyaroo Nature Reserve and Majura Field Firing Range are upwind or adjacent.

As knowledge of FireWise Groups within the Community was poor, initially the plan was to support the Wamboin Rural Fire Brigade to expand the number of Community FireWise Groups (as per the 10 specified in the Application). Later the WRFB emphasised BCRBW involvement should only be to the extent of referring any enquiries to them; however, to support their activities, we did proceed with the following:

- 1) promoting FireWise Groups in June 2022, using the following,



2) fire simulation demonstrations.

The BCRBW organised for the NSW RFS in partnership with the Canberra Region Joint Organisation to give demonstrations of how a fire would progress through the region via a fire simulation table. Using an overhead projection of a map of the region onto a table box containing sand, people were invited to move the sand to reflect the contours of their neighbourhood, and add pins to identify the location of houses and any community structures, e.g. church, community hall, sports fields, plus critical infrastructure such as power stations.

In the scenario demonstrated, the fire started adjacent to the Federal Highway which caused traffic on the highway to be diverted through Bywong with significant impacts on the ability of residents to leave the Region. The silent observation of community onlookers as the simulated fire closed roads, took out power lines and raced up our beautiful ridgelines was everything and the start of an ongoing discussion in our region about fire preparedness.

Two demonstrations were held on the day at the WFRB Fire Station in Wamboin. Approximately 70 people attended.

and

3) An open invitation to attend the Greenway walks and discuss fire preparedness with members of the community, This offer was declined.

2.6 Podcasts



A podcast series was established to open up and encourage new sources of information, views, opinions and ideas. Each was developed and introduced by the BCR Project Officer. Typical listeners are resident of Bywong and Wamboin interested in hearing from local experts on a range of topics, including preparedness and emergency management. Recordings are approximately 10 minutes and episodes are promoted via the Resilient Bywong Wamboin website, local community association websites and social media pages.

Podcasts are available via the BCR website, the QPRC website, Podbean, and Apple.

Identifier	Speaker	Topic
1	Jenny Warren, Group Convener	Weeroona Drive Neighbourhood Group - Why have one?
2	Inspector Keith Price, NSW Police	Local Emergency Management
3	Chief Inspector Robert Cunneen Local Commander Queanbeyan Palerang Region, NSW State Emergency Service	SES Storms and Floods
4	Scott Cashmere and Lachlan Gilchrist from the NSW Rural Fire Service together with Neville Schroder from the Wamboin Rural Fire Brigade	New Australian Fire Danger Rating System, Bust Fire Survival Plans and What to do if a fire impacts our region

5	Rebecca Ryan, General Manager, Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council	Resilient Communities and the role of Local Government
6	Lara Beattie, Australian Red Cross Recovery and Resilience Officer, Snowy Monaro and Queanbeyan-Palerang Local Government Area	The practical and well-being services the Red Cross provides before, during and after emergencies
7	Dr Carol Boughton, Lead Steering Group, Building Community Resilience in Bywong and Wamboin	Tips for leading walks on the Greenways
8	Louise MacDonald, Risk & Emergency Coordinator, Local Land Services, NSW Government	Guidance on preparing for, and during, emergencies with specific reference to looking after animals, including details of services available during an emergency
9	Dr Tony Cotton, Synergy Group	Community Leadership: A Shared Responsibility
10	NSW Rural Fire Service	The AIDER (Assist Infirm, Disabled and Elderly Residents) program is a free, one-off service which supports some of our most at-risk community members. Receipt of podcast is pending.

A further podcast on preventing the loss of valuables and personal items in a natural disaster was agreed with Victoria Pearce, Director, Senior Cultural Conservator, Endangered Heritage but due to unfortunate circumstances could not be completed. Instead, examples of radio broadcasts were made available from www.endangeredheritage.com/radio, such as 'Protecting your household treasures from disasters such as bushfires and floods', and 'How to prepare your household against flash flooding and water damage'.

2.7 Special events

Two special events were held:

1. A workshop on the use and maintenance of chainsaws to give people confidence and a skill in looking after rural properties, and
2. A Health and Family Fun Day during which free health checks were available.

2.8 Finances

The Grant received was for \$80,000 excluding GST.

Total expenditure was just under \$72,000, including GST of \$392.55. The majority of the expenses (\$60,000) related to the engagement of a Project Officer who worked under the direction of the Steering Group.

2.8.1 Unpaid social contributions

The budget included funds to pay walk leaders, guest speakers, event specialists, and the development and delivery of the leadership training. With the exception of event specialists, all other contributors volunteered their time and services, as long as consumables were reimbursed.

The local monthly community newspaper, the Wamboin Whisper, provided free-of-charge a quarter page in each edition for us to promote the monthly events. In one month when a full page to promote events and provide feedback to the community with photos a charge was incurred.

Use of the Bywong Community Hall for BCRBW events was provided free-of-charge.

Members of the Steering Group are all volunteers.

2.8.1.1 Value of unpaid social contributions

Nearly \$13,000 was received in unpaid social contributions from walk leaders, specialist talkers, steering group members, BCA members and the Bywong Hall Committee (hall hire fees).

The values of these unpaid social contributions were calculated based on the number of people involved, an estimated number of hours for different activities and an average hourly rate, or for hall hire the advertised hire rates.

Activity	Number of events	People involved per event	Hours per person per event	Rate (\$/hr or per period of hire)	Value (\$)
Walk events – usual with two leaders and average of one speaker	5	3	2	50	1,500
Walk event – long walk with two leaders	1	2	4	50	200
Leadership*	1	3	3.5	100	1,050
Hall hire – ½ day	6			95	570
Hall hire – full day	2			155	310
Steering Group meetings	18	4	2.5	50	9,000
Family Fun Day** - BBQ put on by BCA	1	2	2	50	200
All					12,830

* Involved professional people engaged in a professional activity

** In addition to the provision of the BBQ lunch by BCA, QPRC provided a kids entertainer, coffee van and OzHelp health assessments.

3. BCRBW Project Outputs and Evaluation

3.1 BCRBW Outputs as detailed in the Grant Application

There were four key outputs identified for the BCRBW Project:

Identifier	Description	Status
1	Publish the Spring and Autumn Walks Programs	In addition to publishing the full walks programs at the beginning of each season, individual walks and other activities were published monthly.
2	Capacity building resources for walk leaders and other community members exercising leadership	Guidance for walk leaders was developed and published on the BCRBW website. A leadership program was developed and a half day session delivered.
3	Evaluation reports	At the end of each walk participants were asked to complete an evaluation sheet, which in part identified further topics for the 'resilience talks' element of the program. The attendees at a Workshop on use and maintenance of chainsaws provided unstructured written feedback after the workshop.
4	Continuity plan for Walk, Talk & Connecting Neighbours	In the absence of GRoW continuing, discussions have taken place with the QPRC S.355 Committee that manages the Greenways and the BCA to organise an annual walk program on the Greenways. More importantly, a strategy has been identified to create a partnership between QPRC and the BCRWB Steering Group to develop wider networks in our community with the development of a governance model for the community resilience program and of content for incorporation into the program. The aim is to build upon the activities and achievements of the Project, so as to continue to build resilience in the community. A report on making the case for future action is included as Appendix 3.

Details of where activities were promoted are provided at Appendix 2 together with examples of the template adopted for promoting activities.

3.2 Walk, Talk and Connect Neighbours Program



3.2.1 Overview

One of the core components of the Project Plan was the **Walk, Talk and Connect Neighbours Program**: facilitated walks along the Bywong/Wamboin Greenways Network of bush tracks and associated rights of way, with a resilience-themed education component. The Project Plan's anticipated deliverable for this component was 'revitalising public walks in the region to encourage appreciation of our natural environment and the resilience of residents'.

Six walks along the Greenways were conducted over the 12 months of the Program, led by community volunteers recruited by the Program's Project Officer. There were 63 participants in at least one walk, with ages ranging from sub-teens to people in their 70s. Participants completed evaluation questionnaires at the conclusion of 5 of the 6 walks.

The anticipated outcomes of the Walk, Talk and Connect Neighbours Program of Greenways walks were attained. The program was a real success, from the point of view of both the participants and the BCR Steering Group. Participants were highly enthusiastic about learning more about the Greenways Network, and being able to walk the Greenways in company with like-minded community members. Furthermore, they found having resilience-themed talks and discussion a useful element.

The Plan stated that 'Walk topics will broadly align with disaster preparedness principles: prepare, response, recovery, resilience and prevention. This will include referring participants to further information sources and local supports. Participant feedback will guide further opportunity to target special interests such as native flora, school holiday walks for young people, protecting homes from smoke etc.'

The Plan also pointed out that 'Community resilience and connection will be enhanced through:

- physical orientation to the area, greenway networks and links to roads and potential fire exits, community halls and the Wamboin Neighbourhood Safer Place
- knowledge of local resources
- engagement between neighbours
- improved physical and mental health
- assisting residents to share insights and experience that has helped them through difficult times in the past.’

3.2.2 The Greenways walks

Six walks were scheduled and conducted throughout the course of the year. It was intended that each would have a resilience-related theme or topic, and someone to speak on it before, during and/or at the end of the walk. The months, locations and themes are given in section 2.3.

3.2.2.1 Walk leaders

The Project Plan envisaged recruiting volunteer leaders for the walks, supported by payment/incentives to walk leaders, with the aim of attracting new and emerging walks leaders. These financial incentives were included in the BCR Program budget. The Project Officer was successful in recruiting volunteer walks leaders from the community, but all declined the offer of an honorarium.

Duty of care documentation

Acknowledging the challenges, and potential risks involved, in conducting walks for the public in native bushland along the Greenways network, the Steering Group developed a set of documentation to provide a sound underpinning for the walks program. This included the following:

- Greenway walk safety risk assessment
- Walks sign-in sheet
- How to prepare and lead Greenways Walks
- Walks evaluation sheet.

3.2.2.2 Walk participants

In this report we refer to both “individuals” and “participants”. The term “individuals” refers to just that: unique individual people. In contrast, the term “participants” refers to participants on the walks. That means, for example, that if an individual attended three walks, that would be given in this report as three “participants”.

Overall, across the 6 walks there were 63 individuals: 39 participated in 1 walk, 11 in 2, 5 in 3, 5 in 4, 2 in 5, and 1 in all six walks, making a total of 112 “participants”.

Age group

The ages of participants ranged from the sub-teens to people in their 70s, with 71% aged between 50 and 79 years.

Walk no.	Age group								Total	Percent
	10-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	n.s.		
1	3	0	0	2	4	2	2	3	16	27
3	2	0	0	2	2	2	2	0	10	17
4	0	0	1	0	6	6	6	1	20	33
5	2	0	0	1	1	3	3	0	10	17
6	0	0	0	1	0	3	0	0	4	7
Total	7	0	1	6	13	16	13	4	60	100
Percent	12	0	2	10	22	27	22	7	100	

Notes:
The total number of participants, 60, differs from the 63 who actually participated owing to missing data from the October 2022 walk.
n.s. means not stated

Note: throughout this report, to enhance readability missing data (i.e. non-responses) have been omitted.

3.2.3 Health and Family Fun Day

Combined with the October Greenway walk and drawing class, BCRBW partnered with BCA and QPRC to host a Health Family Fun Day. Approximately 70 people attended across the day. QPRC supported the event by organising a coffee van and magician, funding for BCA to provide a BBQ and the OzHelp Van (free health checks). Seven people attended the van including an elderly resident who received follow-up with the community nurse the next day.

3.3 Capacity building resources

3.3.1 Walk Leaders

As mentioned under 'Duty of Care Documentation' four documents were developed for guiding leaders of walks on the Greenways, and these are available for download from the [resilientbywongwamboin.net](http://www.resilientbywongwamboin.net) website:

While these documents were designed for the Greenways, they are equally applicable to other rural walks.

3.3.2 Other leaders

In putting together a leadership course we were cognisant of the difficulties people in the region have in 'finding time' to attend a course and so decided on an initial 3-hour course with the aim of delivering more intensive courses taking into account participant needs.

Alas, our intentions were thwarted when only four people registered, with one being from Bungendore outside the Bywong and Wamboin region. None of these participants were interested in further participation. Nonetheless, it was a valuable part of the proof-of-concept element of the Project.

3.3.3 Women specific

A number of women specifically identified using and maintaining a chain saw was a skill they saw as highly important when living on a rural property and if mastered would give them confidence in relation to other resilience related issues. The Workshop was fully booked with a wait list within 24 hours of being publicly promoted. However, by the time of the event many of the women cancelled and after a second promotion via Facebook pages, the course ended up with equal numbers of female (4) and male (4) participants.

The Workshop



Operating equipment safely is an important aspect of managing a small farm and preparing properties for fires, storms and floods. The idea for the workshop came via community feedback from the **Walk, Talk and Connect Neighbours Program** as an opportunity for women in particular to build resilience by developing skills to safely use and maintain a chainsaw. The workshop was an introductory (unaccredited) course for beginners as well as for people with previous experience to refresh their skills. It included a mix of practical and theory components including:

- Responsible attitude and safety
- Chainsaw operation and safety for those around you
- Saw handling, cutting attachments, kickbacks and cross cutting, and
- Chainsaw maintenance

The workshop was presented by Barry Aitchison, a certified trainer and assessor who has been involved in the development and teaching of chainsaw workshops since the early 1980s. He was a Fire Control Officer with the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) for 34 years in the Monaro region and during this time he developed courses for the NSW RFS. Barry was awarded an OAM in 2015 for his

service to the Monaro community and involvement in the scientific research of fire management in the high country. Barry came to the BCR program through our relationship with the Small Farm Network and was engaged as a contractor.

3.3.4 Other events

Two other events were held in conjunction with the September 2022 and October 2022 Greenway Walks. An opportunity to provide drawing classes was identified when participating at a BCA meeting. Promoted as 'Drawing Classes for people who prefer not to walk', the aim behind the drawing classes being held in conjunction with Greenway walks was to expand the number of people exposed to the 'Talk' and 'Network' aspects of the Walks Program and to also offer something people hadn't done before as a possible means of building confidence to undertake other activities within the Community.

Each class was fully booked (15 participants). The second class, in October 2022, was on the same day as the Health and Family Fun Day and a few children who arrived for that joined in near the end of the drawing class.

3.4 Community FireWise Groups

Following the fire simulation demonstrations (section 2.4) a number of people expressed interest in FireWise and made contact with the WRFB attendees.

In addition to the enquiries after the demonstrations, requests about FireWise Groups were received by BCRBW from:

- 12 people registering via 'Join Now' on the ResilientByWongWamboin website, and
- 3 people who emailed the BCRBW Project direct.

As referred to in section 1.2, all requests for information about FireWise when received were forwarded to the Captain, WRFB.

As a consequence, the BCRBW Project has had no direct involvement with expanding the number of Community FireWise Groups. Instead, it facilitated community access to those responsible in the Rural Fire Brigade.

At the time of submission of this report no details on the number of FireWise Groups in the Region have been received from the Captain, WRFB.

4 Evaluation

4.1 Evaluation process

The evaluation applied the Utilisation-focused Evaluation model. Utilisation-focused Evaluation is defined as follows:

Program evaluation is the systematic collection of information about the activities, characteristics, and results of programs to make judgements about the program, improve or further develop program effectiveness, inform decisions about future programming, and/or increase understanding. Utilization-focused program evaluation is evaluation done for and with specific intended primary users for specific, intended uses. (Patton, 2008)

The Utilisation-focused Evaluation model has been assessed as being one of the nine 'Best approaches for twenty-first-century evaluations' (Stufflebeam and Coryn, 2014) using the international program evaluation standards (Yarborough et al., 2011) as the assessment criteria.

At the conclusions of 5 of the 6 Greenways walks, participants completed an evaluation questionnaire in pen and paper format. It included both structured and open-ended response questions. In the interests of confidentiality, the only demographic data requested was age group. A high response rate was attained.

After the Chainsaw Workshop participants were invited to provide written feedback.

4.2 Evaluation findings – Walk program

Reasons for participating

Participants reported many (N=84) and varied reasons for coming on the walks. They can be summarised as exploring, meeting people, interest in the Greenways, exercise & fitness, community involvement, being a nature enthusiast, and personal reasons. Examples follow:

Exploring:

- To explore the Greenways and discover new areas.
- To venture and see what the Greenways have to offer.
- To experience and discover the different paths on the Greenways.

Meeting people:

- To meet and interact with locals who are part of the walk.
- To connect with new people and make local acquaintances.
- To engage with the community and build social connections.

Interest in Greenways:

- Due to a personal interest in the Greenway project.
- To learn more about the Greenways and their significance.
- Because I am interested in supporting and promoting the Greenway initiative.

Exercise and fitness:

- To engage in physical activity and exercise while enjoying nature.
- To maintain an active lifestyle and incorporate exercise.
- To combine fitness and outdoor exploration through walking.

Community involvement:

- To actively participate in community events and initiatives.
- To contribute to the community's efforts and show support.
- To be involved in local projects and community activities.

Nature enthusiast:

- To observe and learn more about the bird species along the Greenways.
- Because I have a keen interest in birdwatching and bird identification.
- To appreciate and enjoy the natural environment and its wildlife.

Personal reasons:

- My dearest mother encouraged me to join this Greenways walk today.
- To spend quality time outdoors and enjoy the fresh air.
- Because I have enjoyed previous walks and wanted to continue the experience

How participants found out about the walks

At two of the Greenways walks, participants provided information on how they found out about the events. They were first asked about information sources other than Facebook. The responses received indicated that friends or neighbours were the leading information source, followed by *The Wamboin Whisper* monthly community newsletter.

How participants found out about the walks: sources other than Facebook								
Source	Friend or neighbour	Community group	Wamboin Whisper	WCA website	BCI website	BCR website	Regional Independent	TOTAL
Number	12	3	9	2	2	2	3	33

They were also asked about which Facebook pages or groups they accessed to find out about the walks. By far the most frequent was the Bywong & Wamboin Hub group, with 10 respondents identifying it as their source of information. Other Facebook pages were identified just 1 or 2 times: Bywong & Wamboin Co-op; Wamboin & Bywong News & Issues; Bungendore, Bywong, Wamboin Region Chatter; Wamboin Community Association; and Bywong Community Inc.

Sufficient pre-walk information?

On two of the walks, participants were asked "Were you able to find enough information about the walk before participating?". All but one of the respondents answered "Yes".

Would you come again?

At the conclusion of all the walks, participants were asked "Would you come again?". All who responded answered "Yes".

Interest in future walks

Participants who indicated that they would like to come on future walks on the Greenways were asked how many they would like to attend each year. Some 40% indicated that they would like to do so 6 more times a year, and 91% indicated 4 or more walks per year.

Walks/year	1	2	3	4	5	6+	Total
Walkers	0	2	5	14	10	19	47

Level of enjoyment

On five walks, participants were asked “How enjoyable did you find today’s walk?” 90 responses were received, with 88 stating that they had found the walk “Very enjoyable” and 2 “Somewhat enjoyable”.

The walks topics/speakers

As noted above, four of the Greenways walks for which participants completed evaluation questionnaires had an explicit resilience theme of particular relevance to the Bywong/Wamboin community, with a speaker on the topic. The themes were:

- Identifying our wildlife and caring for them during a disaster
- Managing dogs in a rural residential area, followed by issues that could arise from a substantial fire in the Bywong and Wamboin region, together with demonstrations of the progress of a fire that started near the Federal Highway using a fire simulation table
- What weed is that, and are you required to remove it from your property?
- A guided retrospective: learnings from walk topics and podcasts including eliciting community members’ suggestions for future resilience-enhancing activities for the community.

Participants were asked “What did you think about today’s speaker/topic?”. 30 of the 38 participants who answered responded that the speaker/topic was very helpful.

View of speaker	Very helpful	Somewhat helpful	Not much help	No help at all	Total
Walkers	30	7	1	0	38

Improvements

Participants were asked if there was anything about the Greenways walk that we could improve. 11 responded “no”, while the following suggestions were proffered:

- Better signage on the Greenways
- Make the walk a bit faster
- Have a sit down talk before the walk
- Better weather for the walk
- Consider a longer walk
- Keep the group together
- Wait for the group to be together before the speaker explains things
- Slow the pace
- Walk was advertised as a shady walk but most of the walk was not in shade
- More birds!
- Another barbecue

Other guest speakers or topics

On five of the Greenways walks participants were asked “Thinking about resilience and connection in our community, what other guest speakers or activities would you like to see offered?”. These were the suggestions proffered (the numbers in square brackets are the number of times mentioned. The remainder were mentioned just once.)

- Bush tucker and native indigenous uses for plants, general info [5]
- Weed identification and control [3]
- Topics around bushfires, climate change, natural disaster; fire management, prevention and information from Fire Brigade volunteers [2]
- More walks [2]
- Someone to identify trees and shrubs, plants, mushrooms [2]
- Information on grasses
- Anything native
- Pretty well the same game as today [i.e. local native birds]
- Wamboin Community Association rep and/or Bywong Community Association rep
- Other mediums of art
- More local walkers
- Tracks and different walks
- Gardens and passive design
- Chainsaw etc skills for women
- What legal obligations to rural property owners have
- Local indigenous leaders
- A local resilience Strategic Plan and Work Plan

4.2.1 Goal attainment and conclusions

Overall, the Walk, Talk and Connect Neighbours Program of Greenways walks was a real success, from the point of view of both the participants and the BCR Steering Group. Participants were highly enthusiastic about learning more about the Greenways Network, and being able to walk the Greenways in company with like-minded community members. Furthermore, they found having resilience-themed talks and discussion a useful element.

The structured feedback received from participants, through the evaluation process, has provided valuable guidance for future organised walks on the Greenways Network, and related resilience-themed activities.

The Project Plan’s anticipated deliverable for this component was ‘revitalising public walks in the region to encourage appreciation of our natural environment and the resilience of residents’. As the evaluation data presented above indicate, this was achieved with considerable success.

The Plan stated that ‘Walk topics will broadly align with disaster preparedness principles: prepare, response, recovery, resilience and prevention. This will include referring participants to further information sources and local supports. Participant feedback will guide further opportunity to target special interests such as native flora, school holiday walks for young people, protecting homes from smoke etc.’ This was also achieved with considerable success.

The Plan also pointed out that ‘Community resilience and connection will be enhanced through:

- physical orientation to the area, greenway networks and links to roads and potential fire exits, community halls and the Wamboin Neighbourhood Safer Place
- knowledge of local resources
- engagement between neighbours
- improved physical and mental health

- assisting residents to share insights and experience that has helped them through difficult times in the past.'

This was also achieved with considerable success.

4.3 Evaluation findings – Chainsaw workshop

Feedback received from workshop participants

Seven of the eight Chainsaw Workshop participants provided feedback on their workshop experience.

Overall, the workshop received positive feedback for its welcoming atmosphere, practical knowledge, emphasis on safety, and hands-on learning opportunities. Participants expressed increased confidence, along with appreciation for the course and the instructor, recommending similar programs to others. The workshop successfully combined theory, practice, and interaction, providing valuable insights into chainsaw usage, safety and maintenance.

Participant 1 commended the friendly and welcoming atmosphere despite the cold weather. Barry Aitchison, the instructor, was praised for his extensive knowledge and ability to deliver information in an easily understandable and practical manner. The workshop catered to both beginners and those with prior experience, serving as a useful refresher. Participants had the opportunity to apply their new-found knowledge, and Barry provided individual assistance to each person, fostering a supportive learning environment. Participant 1 expressed feeling more comfortable and safe using a chainsaw on their property after attending the workshop.

Participant 2 also had a wonderful time and appreciated gaining a better understanding of how chainsaws work. They highlighted the importance of using the appropriate tools, chains, sharpeners, and oil for different chainsaw models. The theory portion of the workshop provided a solid foundation, instilling confidence before participants engaged in hands-on activities. Barry's clear communication and emphasis on safety resonated with this participant, who now feels confident and safe to tackle small projects on their property.

Participant 3 praised the Chainsaw Workshop as a full day dedicated to chainsaw safety, maintenance, and practical wood cutting. They pointed out that the workshop attracted a roughly equal mix of male and female participants. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the workshop and left with enhanced knowledge.

Participants 4 and 5 expressed gratitude for the course, emphasising Barry's wealth of information and ability to create a comfortable environment for a diverse class. They appreciated the opportunities to share experiences and learn from both the instructor and fellow participants. As a result of the workshop, one participant now feels confident to sharpen their own chains and operate their chainsaw safely. They commended the BCR team on the initiative and recommended similar safety courses for rural residents of all ages.

Participant 6 was grateful for being included in the course at the last minute and found it well presented by Barry. They felt more confident in using their battery-operated chainsaw and noticed increased efficiency. The opportunity to practice different operations under supervision and learn from others was highly appreciated. While the booklet that was provided covered the necessary information. This participant suggested having participants keep their chainsaws on the table during the morning talk session to easily relate instructions to their own equipment.

Participant 7 joined in praising the workshop, describing it as the perfect mix of theory, practice, and learning how to avoid mishaps in chainsawing, safety, and maintenance. They also expressed delight in meeting a diverse group of people and extended gratitude to Barry Aitchison and Amanda Jones (BCR Project Officer and organiser of the Workshop).

(This Chainsaw Safety and Maintenance Workshop report was prepared by the BCR Steering Group, based on a summary generated by OpenAI's ChatGPT on 31 May 2023 after the actual feedback from participants was uploaded to the generator.)

4.4 Evaluation findings – Resourcing

There were two aspects to the Project Officer's role:

1. Organising activities
2. Promoting activities, including keeping our partners engaged with the Program.

Organising the walks, identifying and recruiting the speakers, promoting the walks, identifying leaders willing to fill that role, and actually implementing the walks, occupied a considerable amount of time, and effort, on the part of the Project Officer, Amanda Jones.

The Project Officer became the face of the Program as well as the centre of a network sharing information direct to the many diverse interest groups in the Region. This proved to be a very valuable promotion strategy.

She was supported in her activities by the members of the Steering Group.

The overall benefits achieved are directly related to the consistent and continuous efforts of the Project Officer. This highlights the fact that any ongoing program of activity similar to these Greenways walks should be supported by individual(s) who are employed for this specific task.

5 BCRBW Outcomes

5.1 The BCRBW Outcomes as detailed in the Grant Application.

There were two areas of outcomes identified as follows:

Identifier	Description	Status
1	Every member of the community who takes part in the program will have:	
1.1	Increased awareness, confidence & knowledge of how to improve their resilience living in a rural residential community.	Some positive signs
1.2	Taken at least one new step to make improvements or changes.	Some positive indications
2	Increase the number of existing Community FireWise Groups by at least 10 new groups by the end of this program.	No direct action was undertaken towards this. Although sought, no information on this has been provided by WRFB

Before the program commenced or an individual participated in a particular event, there was no base level of knowledge established in relation to 1.1 and 1.2 above. Hence, there can be no direct measure of any changes.

5.2 The Walks Program and other Events

Based on the evaluation provided in section 4.2 there is evidence to suggest those people who did engage with the Program did become more aware of the many aspects to resilience and participated in ways to increase their confidence.

5.3 Community FireWise Groups

The WRFB has provided no information to indicate that the number of Community FireWise groups increased over the last 12 months. Apart from one centrefold in The Wamboin Whisper no additional promotion of Firewise by WRFB was evident during this period.

Although supportive of the Grant application, in reality there was no buy-in by the local volunteer fire brigade to working together to increase the number of Community FireWise groups.

While we continued to talk about FireWise Groups in the context of being prepared for fire and the assistance available from the WRFB, we concentrated our efforts on developing the podcast series

with talks from specialists engaged in preparation for all types of emergency, emergency response and emergency recovery.

5.4 Applicability to other regions

Greenways are as diverse in their contemporary forms as the geographical regions they sample, but all aim to provide a natural environment for the benefit of users and in many situations local wildlife. Is the concept of a walk, talk and connect program to enhance community resilience based on the Greenways in Bywong and Wamboin rural residential region transferrable to a Greenway in a large city or a totally rural environment?

In reality the concept of walk, talk and connect is applicable to any environment be in a 'green' environment on residential footpaths or the local mall. The question is more one of what have we learned from our BCR project that could be transferrable to any of these environments.

From our experience:

- Promotion is a key factor; promotion via multiple media
- Publish in advance a program with dates and times
- Have a topic, pre-publicised, to talk about, so that even if people don't know each other there is a common interest to start a conversation
- Select topics that the target audience has identified as being of interest
- Where possible seek a local person who has experience in the selected topic
- Consider other activities and combine activities to broaden the range of potentially interested
- Ending activities with a 'cuppa' builds better social cohesion

5.5 Resilience Program Continuity

From the Steering Group's perspective, the Building Community Resilience in Bywong and Wamboin program was a proof of concept testing two approaches to enhancing community resilience: the use of facilitated Greenways walks which proved effective and through establishment of new FireWise Groups which was somewhat less successful and was substituted with a series of resilience targeted podcasts.

The walks program required substantial support from the Project Officer to get established and be sustained. However, the project identified that with minimal resources, in the form of a part-time Project Officer, a number of useful resilience initiatives could be delivered.

Two avenues have been identified for continuing our Resilience Program in cooperation with local government, QPRC:

1. Development of a Community Plan, and
2. Design and implementation of a community resilience program with two primary activities: program content identification and development of a governance model for community resilience, for which grant funding will be sought.

As the final activity in the current project, a report detailing how to proceed has been developed and is included at Appendix 3.

6 Summary and Conclusions

Unfortunately the imposition of COVID restrictions significantly reduced the time frame in which the BCR Program could be implemented and hence the extent of the activities that could be undertaken.

Notwithstanding the reduced period, sufficient activities were planned and undertaken to demonstrate that with a dedicated resource, even though only part-time, the concept of planned walk, talk and connect with neighbours proved effective in raising awareness of the many different aspects of resilience. Other events addressing health and confidence also provided benefits.

The key to the success of the Program is no doubt the engagement of the part-time Project Officer. The question arises as to what could be achieved if such a person were available over a longer time period.

Working in partnership with QPRC our plan is to test that concept as the next step in continuing to build community resilience in Bywong and Wamboin.

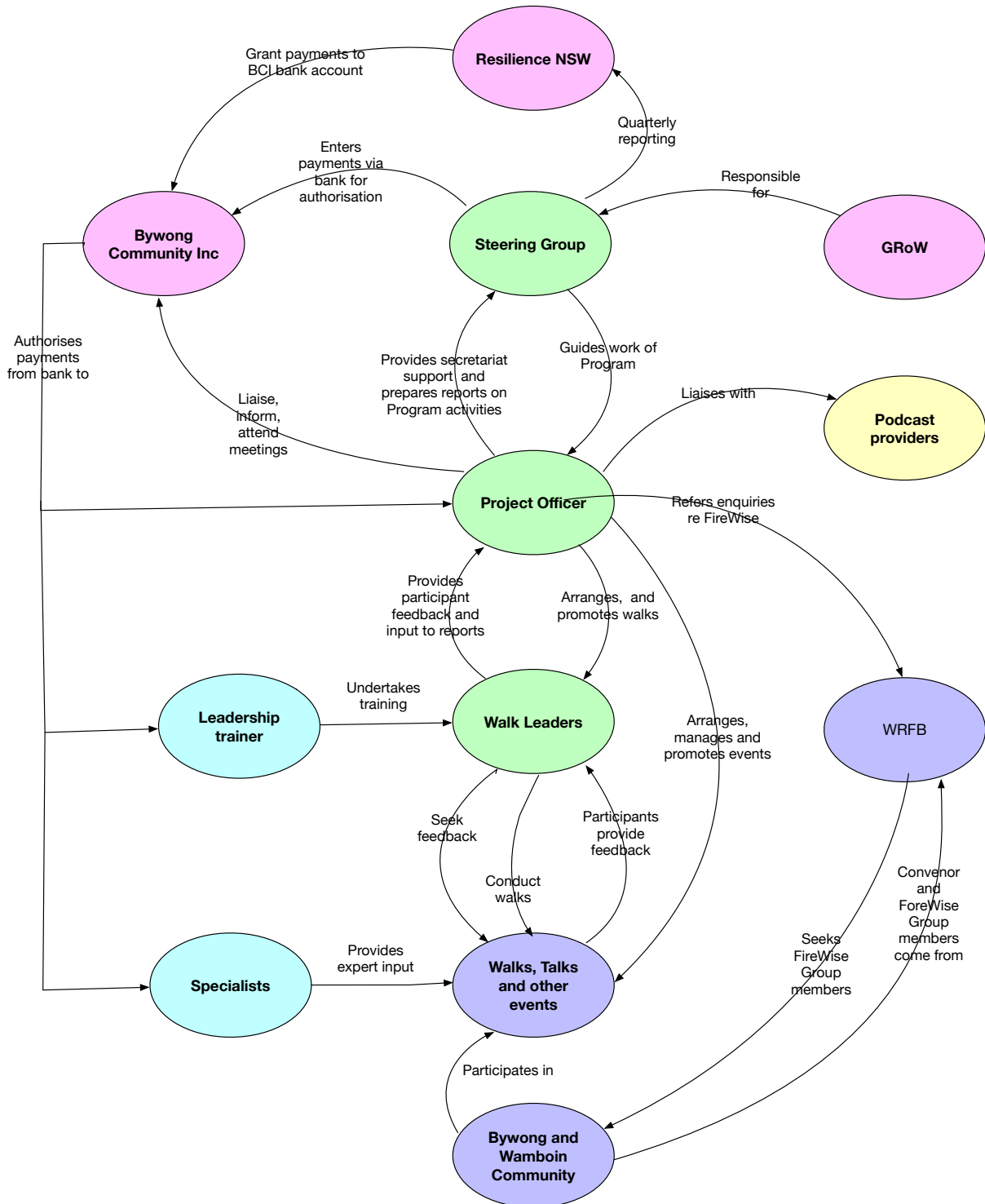
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Appendix 1 – BCRBW Governance Arrangements



Appendix 2 – Promoting our activities

Activities were promoted via the following media, as well as via attendance at the monthly meetings of the Bywong and Wamboin community associations:

- BCRBW website (<https://www.resilientbywongwamboin.net>)
 - Other websites:
 - Bywong Community Association (<http://www.bywongcommunity.org.au>)
 - Wamboin Community Association (<http://www.wamboincommunity.asn.au>)
 - Local community papers
 - Regional Independent
 - The Wamboin Whisper
 - Sutton Chatter
 - Local Facebook pages
 - Bywong and Wamboin Hub (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/BywongAndWamboin>)
 - Bywong and Wamboin Co-op (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/215590356242355>)
 - Wamboin and Bywong News (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/664911157234893>)
 - Wamboin and Bywong Community Board (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/188357944690761>)
 - Wamboin Community Association (<https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=wamboin%20community%20association>)
 - Bywong Community Inc (<https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=Bywong%20Community%20Inc>)
 - Bungendore, Bywong, Wamboin Region Chatter (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/173252503028575>)
-

The BCRBW resilience website contained the following graphics and text:



Australian Government



This is a Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Fund project through the joint Commonwealth/State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements. Although funding for this program has been provided by both the Australian and NSW Governments, the material contained herein does not necessarily represent the views of either government.

Examples of promotions follow:



WAMBOIN AND BYWONG
GREENWAYS WALKS
10AM, SUNDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 2022

Meeting at Bywong Hall, walking to Birchmans Grove and return.

Joining the walk will be guest speakers to share information about birds in our local area and caring for injured wildlife.

For people who prefer not to walk, drawing classes will be held in the hall.

All welcome to meet after the walk for scones and a cuppa.

Building Community Resilience





WAMBOIN AND BYWONG

GREENWAYS WALKS

10AM, SUNDAY 23 OCTOBER 2022

WALK commencing at 10am from Bywong Hall to Millpost Hill and return. Our guest speaker will discuss preventing the loss of valuables and personal items in a natural disaster.

DRAWING CLASS back by popular demand! For people who prefer not to walk drawing classes will be held in the Bywong Hall commencing 10:00am, please contact John-Pierre jsfavre@gmail.com.

HEALTHY FAMILY DAY from 11am - 2pm hosted by QPRC and the Bywong Community Association including FREE BBQ, coffee van, magic show and health checks. All welcome.

ALL WELCOME

Building Community Resilience



WAMBOIN AND BYWONG

FREE COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERING AND MENTORING PROGRAM

Volunteering can make a difference in your life and the lives of others. The Bywong and Wamboin Community Resilience Program is hosting a **FREE 90 minute program on Saturday 8 October at the Bywong Hall**. We want to help you and our community to build capacity and resilience and support people that are interested in becoming involved (but maybe aren't sure how) and those currently volunteering and looking to learn new skills, expand their networks and create a mindset to support our community into the future.

For more information and to register go to our website www.resilientbywongwamboin.net

Building Community Resilience



GREENWAY WALKS AUTUMN 2023

The Building Community Resilience Program in Bywong and Wamboin is supporting Greenways Walks with guest speakers and community get-togethers.

10am Sunday
12 March

Meet at 105 Clare Lane for a shady 3km walk. Learn about weed management from our QPRC Biosecurity Officer.

9:30am Sunday
2 April

Meet at the Bywong Hall to walk to Birchmans Grove and return to the hall for scones and a cuppa. (This walk was curtailed in Spring 2022 due to wet weather) Our local QPRC Rural Support Officer will be sharing his experiences in the Black Summer Fires.

10am Sunday
7 May

Meet at the Bywong Hall for our most ambitious walk, the Mill Post Hill loop. This walk will take 3.5 - 4 hours, bring your lunch. After the walk, you are welcome to join us for afternoon tea in the hall.

Want to know more?

Keep an eye out in local media and community Facebook pages each month for our articles on upcoming events.

To view Greenways maps go to www.bywongcommunity.org.au/greenways/maps-and-walks/

In case of bad weather, program updates will be posted on the BCR website <https://www.resilientbywongwamboin.net>.

ALL WELCOME



Appendix 3 – Continuing Building Community Resilience in Bywong and Wamboin

Included as Appendix 3 is a report titled “Bywong and Wamboin Community Plan 2023-26 - Building Community Resilience – Making the case for future action”



BUILDING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

Bywong and Wamboin Plan 2023-26

Making the case for future action

Prepared for the BCRBW Steering Group

Meriel Schultz

LMS Consulting

June 2023

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Purpose

Building Community Resilience in Bywong and Wamboin continues to be an important need in the community. The importance of building strong and resilient communities is recognised throughout Australia at national, state and local levels. Many small communities such as ours are developing community plans to assist in preparing for risk and disasters at local level. The aim of these plans is to identify key areas of need and to develop actions to strengthen the resilience of residents and community groups.

This paper sets out proposed next steps for the next three years of the BCRBW project. These next steps will build on successes of the pilot program undertaken in 2021-23 and take into account the challenges experienced.

About the pilot program

The BCRBW pilot was funded through a Resilience NSW grant in July 2021. Due to Covid restraints the project did not commence until early 2022 and concluded in June 2023. The pilot sought to improve resilience against future disaster in the area (e.g. bushfires, floods, drought, storm and medical). The project was activity-focused and included the following:

- *Walk, talk and connect* – revitalising public walks in the region to encourage shared appreciation of the natural environment and the resilience of residents
- *Community FireWise groups* – encouraging and further expanding local FireWise groups.
- *Step up and step out* – a community leadership program offering leadership training and support for potential walk organisers, group convenors, etc.

Key learnings

Key learnings from the pilot project are outlined in full in the **Project Report**. Of particular relevance for ongoing action are:

- **The vital role of a paid coordinator and support staff** to drive the project and connect with residents and groups 'on the ground'. Depending on a small group of volunteers is not enough to sustain strong community action.
- **The need for a planned consultation strategy** to ensure that future programs are based on a community development approach built from the bottom up and agreed in principle by a range of community groups and individuals. There is a large literature addressing community development approaches. Two articles relevant to working in small communities and getting the approach right can be found at:
 - King C & Cruickshank M. Building capacity to engage: community engagement or government engagement? *Community Development Journal*, Volume 47, Issue 1. January 2012. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cdj/bsq018>
 - Berkes F & Ross H. 2012. Community Resilience: toward an integrated approach. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08941920.2012.736605>
- **Priorities for action** that flow from the consultation process.
- **A strong communication and marketing strategy** so that residents and local groups have adequate information in a number of forms about the work of the BCRBW and identify ways in which they can contribute to the community action.
- **The importance of working with the 'willing' and building strong connections between existing community groups**, while acknowledging their particular interests, roles, and capacity to join future resilience building projects in the area.
- **Enabling conversations and community building** to occur informally through shared activities in community.
- **A need for adequate and ongoing resources** and supporting infrastructure, including agreed **partnerships and funding** to strengthen community action.

Proposed next steps

Aims and Objectives

The BCRBW project aims to:

- Strengthen readiness among residents and community groups to prepare for future disasters and risk situations.

The BCRBW will achieve progress against this aim by:

- Building on the findings of the pilot project.
- Using a community development approach, ensuring ownership and inclusion among and between community groups and individuals.
- Consulting widely with the local community and community groups, in partnership with QPRC.
- Identifying priorities for action, as agreed with local community.
- Seeking funding to implement actions against the nominated priorities.
- Monitoring and evaluating the usefulness of the strategies used and the impact the activities have on improved community resilience.

By the end of the project the community will have improved resilience in the face of disaster through:

- An identified set of priorities for action that address risk and establish effective preparation measures in community.
- Establishment of robust interaction and communication channels, accessible to all.
- Engagement in community activities that address the priorities for action.
- Strong partnerships established, both in the community and with outside stakeholders.

Three staged process

The following table details the proposed three stages. Of particular importance is the exploratory stage. While the pilot has gone part way in exploring and understanding the community, it is vital that the community is drawn into all future processes and that it is the community that informs and owns and contributes to action against agreed priorities.

Stage 1 2023-4	Exploration Gathering information and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community consultation • Partnership building • Priority setting • Action planning • Monitoring, evaluation & learning plan • Communication plan • Resource acquisition (grants processes) noting in particular the importance of the project coordinator to be funded for three years.
Stage 2 2024-5	Implementation & Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of activities against agreed priority areas • Continued action against all stage one items • Data and information collection to inform processes and progress
Stage 3 2025-6	Implementation/evaluation/repor ting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of planned activities • Evaluation

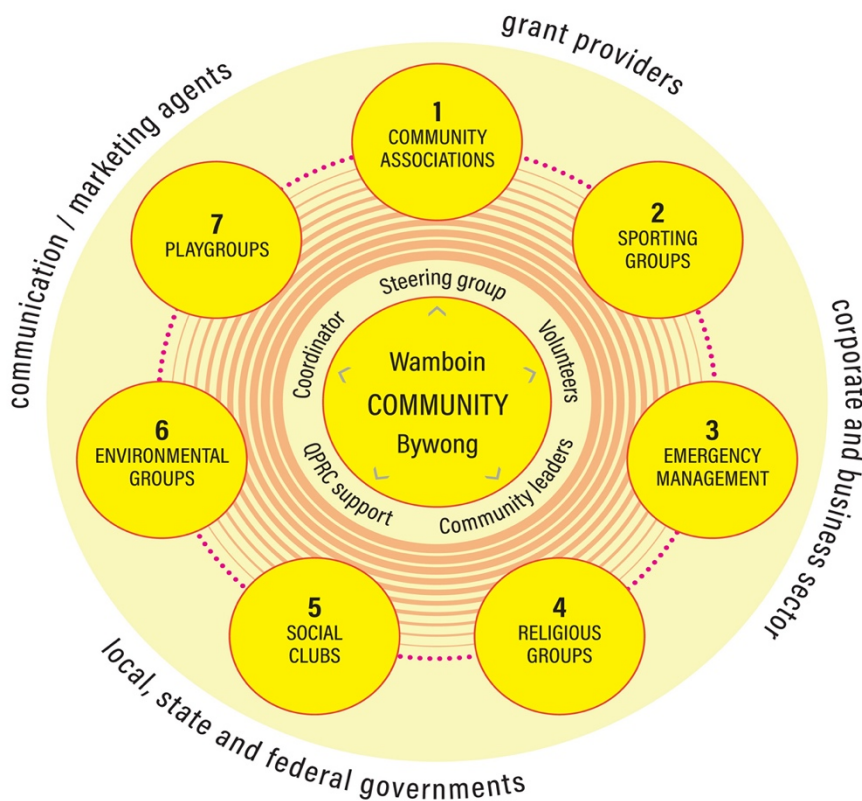
Strategies for action will include:

- A community development approach, so that the work of the project is driven from the community for the community and supported with appropriate infrastructure, partnerships and support, including funding.
- Building our community capacity to work together on agreed priorities for action.
- Comprehensive communication and consultation in the community, including between community groups.
- A monitoring and evaluation mechanism so that inputs, outputs, process and impact can be appropriately recorded.

Applying community development approaches to this project.

The following model sets out the way in which a community development approach will be applied to this project.

BCRBW Community Development Model



Key to the model and numbered groups.

The model demonstrates community centrality. The community informs and drives the project. The community is supported by a Section 355 committee, QPRC, community leaders and volunteers. The community and these supports work with existing community groups some of which may interact with each other on issues of common interest. In turn external infrastructure support is drawn from those nominated in the outer ring of the model.

Bywong/ Wamboin has a large number of formal and informal groups. Examples include:

- 1 Bywong and wamboin Community Associations (BCA and WCA) and a small number of S355 committees. Social media and newsletters are produced through the WCA
- 2 Table tennis, Kowen Forest runners, pony clubs, golf, pilates
- 3 Rural Fire Service (Wamboin), police (Bungendore and Queanbeyan) NSW SES (Queanbeyan)
- 4 Sutton Road Mission District (Anglican churches in Wamboin and Sutton), bible study group
- 5 Wamboin social club, Wonderful Women of Wamboin (WoWs), bridge group, book club
- 6 LandCare, WildCare, ARF (rescue and foster dogs), Greenways
- 7 Sutton school playgroup, Wamboin playgroup

Governance

Governance is best described for this project as Community Leadership Governance. (2019 EOSC Governance Framework. European Commission). The following model, adapted from the EOSC, shows how (in a small community setting) community leadership governance can work.

Effective Community Governance Model



1 Community Problems Solving:

Aligns "Engaging Citizens" and "Getting Things Done."

2 Organizations Managing for Results:

Aligns "Measuring Results" and "Getting Things Done."

3 Citizens Reaching for Results:

Aligns "Engaging Citizens" and "Measuring Results."

4 Communities Governing for Results:

Aligns all three core skills.

The Project Team

In order to 'engage, solve problems, measure, manage for results and get things done' there is a need for a strong project team to drive the project in and with community. **Attachment A** outlines the proposed team, their roles and responsibilities.

The results of the pilot project show the importance of engaging paid staff to plan, promote, organise and evaluate community-based projects. Relying on a small band of volunteers is not enough and unlikely to allow for sustained action. Equally important is 'in-kind' support – from volunteers, community leaders and stakeholders from local government, business and corporate sectors. Bringing these stakeholders on board will be most successful if managed through an identified team of skilled, paid project staff.

Partnerships

QPRC is a vital partner in this project. In particular Council is vital to supporting the consultation process and assisting in grants identification and application. Support with grants applications, sources of funding and consultation processes will be welcomed. Likewise, the two local Community Associations are important partners in this project. Other partners may be found from within the local community groups, or from corporate and business sectors.

Overall risks and benefits for the project

Risks

- Difficulty recruiting a suitable project leader (coordinator)
- Numbers attending consultations/interest in the community
- Scope of communication and marketing of the community resilience plan
- Managing community expectations
- Bringing existing groups on board to contribute
- Insufficient funding

Benefits

- As seen from the pilot, recruitment of a coordinator brings untold benefit in putting a 'face' to the project on the ground, in community and enabling direct and ongoing action.
- A robust communication plan will help iron out some of the current issues with patchy or inaccessible communication in the area.
- Staging the project will ensure thorough preliminary work is completed within the community before priority setting and action. Residents and groups are more likely to 'come on board' if they have contributed to this priority setting agenda.

Indicative Costs

Funding will be sought through Grants applications to enable:

- Recruitment and retention of a paid part-time project team (as described at **Attachment A**)
- Consultation/community workshops
- Promotional activities
- Activity based funding (as determined through community consultation)
- Evaluation

Timeframe

<i>Year One</i>	<i>Year 2</i>	<i>Year 3</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form S355 committee • Staff recruitment • Consultation/priority setting • Communication plan • Evaluation plan • Reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing consultation • Activities against priorities • Monitoring & analysis • Reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of activities • Feedback sessions in community • Evaluation • Reporting

In summary

Building Community Resilience in Bywong and Wamboin is an exciting example of community action in a small rural/residential community in New South Wales. The project aims to build and strengthen community resilience in the face of actual or future disasters through planned activities developed by residents and community leaders, together with a wide range of other stakeholders. A community development approach will ensure ownership by community and will benefit from the support of a skilled project team, an identified S355 committee and the QPRC. Learnings from the project will be shared with other small communities in Australia, so that successful approaches may be replicated.

Attachment A – POSITIONS FOR BCRBW PROJECT

Title	Role/responsibilities	Hours	Time frame	Cost
Project Coordinator	Drive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation • Communication • Activities on the ground • Collect information • Reporting 	Part time	3 years (annual review)	Paid position
Project Officer	Undertake: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning, • Research, • Evaluation • Support for development of grants submissions 	Part time or intermittent contractual basis	3 years (annual review)	Paid Position
Administrative support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise meetings • Minutes and communication • Promotion/social media • General admin support 	Part time	3 years (annual review)	Paid Position
QPRC	Assistance with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of grants opportunities • Promotion of project • Data entry • Development of community plans • Provision of community spaces (eg community hall, council rooms etc) 	As required	3 years (annual review)	In kind support

Governance

The project team will be accountable to a Section 355 committee (to be formed asap and comprising volunteers) with responsibility to manage the project and fulfil the legal responsibilities of a Section 355 committee.

Partnerships

The project team will work in partnership with the Section 355 committee, community groups, community leaders, QPRC and business and corporate sector stakeholders.

Benefits

The team will provide:

- The glue that holds the project together identified leaders for the project
- A strong skills set to plan, promote, drive and evaluate the project
- Agents for continuity of action
- Key drivers 'on the ground'

Risks

- Recruiting the right people with the required skills.
- Lack of interest of response from stakeholders – including the community.
- Sufficient knowledge of the Bywong/Wamboin community.
- Adequacy of budget.

Funding Source

The paid positions will be subject to grants submissions – identified with assistance from QPRC.